

California State University, Stanislaus  
**DEFINITION AND PROCESS FOR APPROVAL OF MEMORANDUM OF  
UNDERSTANDING WITHIN ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

**DEFINITION**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is defined as an agreement of cooperation between two or more organizations defining roles and responsibilities of each with respect to developing a partnership or project.

Its purpose is to indicate a spirit of cooperation between CSU Stanislaus and other agencies prior to any actions commencing or prior to any contracts that may develop later as a result of the intended partnership.

The MOU is distinguished from a contract in that a MOU is not a binding, legal document and does not contain a fiscal commitment or an exchange of goods or services between the parties. (If the agreement confers resources to the CSU that directly benefits the agency and entitles the agency to receive a service/program, it is generally considered a contract and subject to formal contract clearance procedures.)

However, terminology varies among agencies, and some contracts that are legally binding and contain fiscal commitments may be termed "Memorandum of Understanding."

**SCOPE**

Agreements with external agencies in direct support of the university's instructional programs (e.g., internships, student teaching) are handled by academic departments and do not require an additional MOU as defined here. Service learning and study abroad placements are governed by written agreements as defined by other university processes. All other MOUs would normally follow the review and approval process described in this document.

**MOU TEMPLATE**

Within Academic Affairs, a MOU should explicitly state that it is not legally binding and normally contains the following information:

- Title (specifying the agencies and topic)
- Purpose, goals, or objectives
- Background
- Roles and responsibilities of each agency
- Roles and responsibilities of other participants (e.g., students or faculty)
- Length of commitment (timeframe)
- Process and time frame for continuance or discontinuance
- Signature lines, with names, titles, and dates for approval

**APPROVAL OF THE MOU**

For MOUs generated by faculty, the approval process normally requires review and approval by the following individuals, and possibly others, as appropriate to the specific MOU. A MOU generated by academic support units within academic affairs may require consultation with faculty and administrative governance groups, as appropriate to the issue, and may require approval signatures other than those listed below. In all cases, approval is required from either the vice provost or provost.

- Faculty member
- Department Chair
- Dean
- Vice Provost
- Provost (normally delegated to the Vice Provost)
- President (normally delegated to the Provost)

A MOU Signature Approval form for routing is attached.

Questions about MOUs may be directed to the Vice Provost via the Office of Academic Programs.

:je (11/03; revised 4/6/04; 8/30/04; 9/13/04; 9/21/04; 11/22/04)

**Memorandum of Understanding**  
(within Academic Affairs)  
California State University, Stanislaus  
Office of Academic Programs

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Memorandum of Understanding  
between  
California State University, Stanislaus  
and

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(Agency)

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(Title of MOU)

Requests for approval of a new Memorandum of Understanding should follow the format on the document titled *Definition and Process for Approval of Memorandum of Understanding within Academic Affairs*.

**Approvals:**

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Department Faculty Member	Date
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Department Chair	Date
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College Dean	Date
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Vice Provost	Date
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Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs	Date
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President	Date
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(Note: Provost approval is normally delegated to the Vice Provost; President approval is normally delegated to the Provost)